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FHM

IT'S GREAT TO BE A MAN

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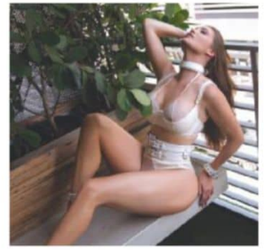

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INSIDE THE WORLD

Hideo Kojima

In the world of video games, there are numerous visionaries that have brought us some of the greatest games ever made, but very few live up to the legendary status that Japan's Hideo Kojima possesses. He is an enigma in the industry, a true auteur that does not budge on his vision (to a fault sometimes) and a man that has revolutionized the gaming landscape on numerous occasions. In 2021, Kojima is one of the very few dominant voices left in an industry that has become more corporate by the second, yet how did this mild-mannered man from Japan keep his head above the ever-increasing cutthroat nature of the gaming world and how has he managed to avoid the corporate decision making that plagues so many other auteurs? It's very simple really, Hideo Kojima's games are amazing, genre-bending and weird as hell.

The Big Boss

Born on August 24, 1963, in Setagaya Tokyo, Hideo Kojima was the youngest of three children. From a very young age, Kojima fell in love with movies, especially those from America, as his parents would watch movies every night with their kids. This had a massive impact on the young Kojima and he dreamt of one day being a filmmaker or creative artist, even though social norms in Japan at the time dictated that you choose stable income over creativity. Unfortunately, those movie nights would come to a sudden halt, as tragically Kojima's father passed away when he was 13, leaving the family in a dire financial situation. Kojima had to take care of himself throughout his school years, often arriving home to an empty house. This sense of isolation played an important part in his outlook on life, as he expressed being restless whenever he was alone, thus opting for social interactions to break the discomfort. Due to the tragedy, Kojima was forced into studying a more financially secure degree, so he found himself studying economics, however, he was able to find a creative outlet between the boring lectures. Writing short stories in his spare time, Kojima allowed his imagination to run wild, with some short stories coming in over 400 pages. This proved a slight problem, as Kojima submitted every single short story to various outlets, with every single one rejected, not due to quality but due to it being way too long to submit as a short story, the cut-off was 100 pages. Kojima refused to cut his stories down as this would alter his original vision, a trait that would serve him well 20 years later. Kojima's love for film was also as strong as ever, and in university, he teamed up with a friend to shoot films on an old 8mm camera. For family and friends, it seemed an obvious choice that he would pursue his passion and become a filmmaker one day, but Kojima being Kojima, shocked them all when he announced he would rather go into the gaming industry and make games. This shocked everyone as in the early 80's the gaming scene was extremely volatile and nowhere near as financially viable as today, yet Kojima could not be talked out of it. In his mind, gaming was the future and he wanted to be part of it.

A Snake in the Metal Gears

After applying to various game developers, Kojima was eventually hired by Konami in 1986 as a designer and planner. His first few years were frustrating, as the majority of his ideas were rejected by his seniors for being too out there or not viable for the gaming sector. Instead, he was given an already existing IP in the form of a sequel to Antarctic Adventure, a simple platformer that saw you play as a penguin, traveling to different stations and avoiding traps. Kojima decided to fully embrace this opportunity and instead of just creating a simple sequel he decided to add in improved action, RPG elements, and multiple endings. Penguin Adventure was a considerable step up from its prequel and sold well enough for Konami to put more faith in their young brashful employee. A senior associate approached Kojima in the hope that he can add a bit of his magic to a little game called Metal Gear, a new IP that has been floating around the Konami offices for a while. Initially pitched as an action combat game, Kojima was frustrated with the limited technology he had to work with, feeling the combat does not work and is not enjoyable at all. Instead, he drew inspiration from his love of film, especially The Great Escape, and decided to turn Metal Gear into a stealth game, an idea that did not sit well with the Konami higher-ups. It was a huge success, as gamers have never experienced a game like this before and went on to do great numbers on the MSX2 and the Nintendo Entertainment System. Konami had a hit on their hands and it was all thanks to the forward-thinking of one Hideo Kojima. With the success of Metal Gear, Kojima was given the opportunity to create his very own game from scratch, and due to his love of storytelling, he moved into the increasingly popular graphic adventure genre with Snatcher, a game that focussed on storytelling, mature content, and cinematic cutscenes. Once again a Kojima game turned into a critical and financial success for Konami, and in just a few short years Kojima established himself as the go-to guy at the company. In 1990 Kojima returned to the Metal Gear series, this time given a bigger budget and a team of his own. Titled Metal Gear 2: Solid Snake, Kojima and his team expanded on everything that made the original such a great game, refining the stealth formula and making it a mainstay mechanic in gaming forever. It also touched on some risky subject matter, such as the nature of warfare. It explored these themes and ideas in a mature way, cementing Kojima as a talented storyteller above just being a game designer in the industry. It was another homerun for Kojima, as the sequel broke all records and established Metal Gear as one of the most exciting franchises available at the time. Although Kojima was still frustrated with the technology he had to work with, there was a change in the air for the gaming scene. After a failed partnership between Nintendo and Sony, the electronic giants decided to enter the gaming scene themselves, bringing technology that was unheard of at the time. When the PlayStation eventually launched in December of 1994, people were amazed by the 3D technology, seeing games do things never thought of, Kojima knew that finally, his time had arrived to truly explore all the fantastical ideas in his head.

The Gaming Rockstar

In 1998, Konami and Hideo Kojima unleashed Metal Gear Solid onto the unsuspecting gaming world, changing the gaming landscape forever. The game, widely considered now as one of the greatest of all time, revolutionized video game storytelling with a heavy emphasis on cutscenes, breakthrough gameplay mechanics, and 3D graphics that pushed the boundaries of what the console was capable of. The protagonist, Solid Snake became one of the most iconic gaming characters in history and along with his creator, Kojima, was now a household name. Metal Gear Solid won numerous awards that year and is considered to this day as one of the most important games ever made. Due to its incredible success, a sequel would soon follow, and fans couldn't wait to play as their beloved Solid Snake again. Kojima however had other ideas. With the new PlayStation 2 announced, people were eagerly awaiting their first glimpse of the sequel on the new powerful console and at E3 2000 they were not disappointed. A nine-minute gameplay trailer revealed Solid Snake sneaking onto a tanker filled with militia. It was mind-blowing at the time, with incredible weather effects never seen before on a console, insane detail everywhere and Solid Snake looking better than ever, fans around the world could not wait for its release. And in 2001 fans finally got their wish, Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty was released to great critical and commercial success. Yet Kojima had a surprise up his sleeve that shocked everyone who played the game. Solid Snake, the main character of the previous game, was quickly disposed of in the opening mission, leaving players to assume the role of a new blonde-haired recruit named Raiden. People were shocked and furious at the time, how could Kojima get rid of the main protagonist, beloved by everyone, how dare he. But that is what makes Kojima such a fascinating developer, someone who does what he wants and how he wants it. Kojima further refined stealth and espionage with the third mainline game in the Metal Gear Solid series, Snake Eater, released in 2004. Instead of taking place in indoor locations like its predecessors, Snake Eater put players in a Soviet jungle setting during the Cold War, focusing on survival mechanics and more in-depth storytelling through the eyes of Big Boss. Needless to say, it went on to become one of the greatest video games of all time, playing out like a well-constructed James Bond film rather than a traditional gaming experience. At this stage Kojima was growing tired of the Metal Gear series and wanted to move on from it, but when the inevitable sequel Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots was announced, with Kojima's involvement, fans lost their minds. The Kojima team even received death threats and various pressures from the Konami higher-ups. Reluctantly Kojima returned to the series to help co-direct the fourth installment with Shuyo Murata. Guns of the Patriots brought the Metal Gear saga to a close, bringing an end to Solid Snake's and Big Bosses' storylines. Although a divisive game due to its incredibly long cutscenes, some coming in at 90 minutes, Guns of the Patriots was still a huge financial and critical success for Kojima and Konami. Then, for three years Kojima went silent. Fans and experts were speculating what he was up to, would it be another Metal Gear game or was the Japanese auteur brewing up something completely new?

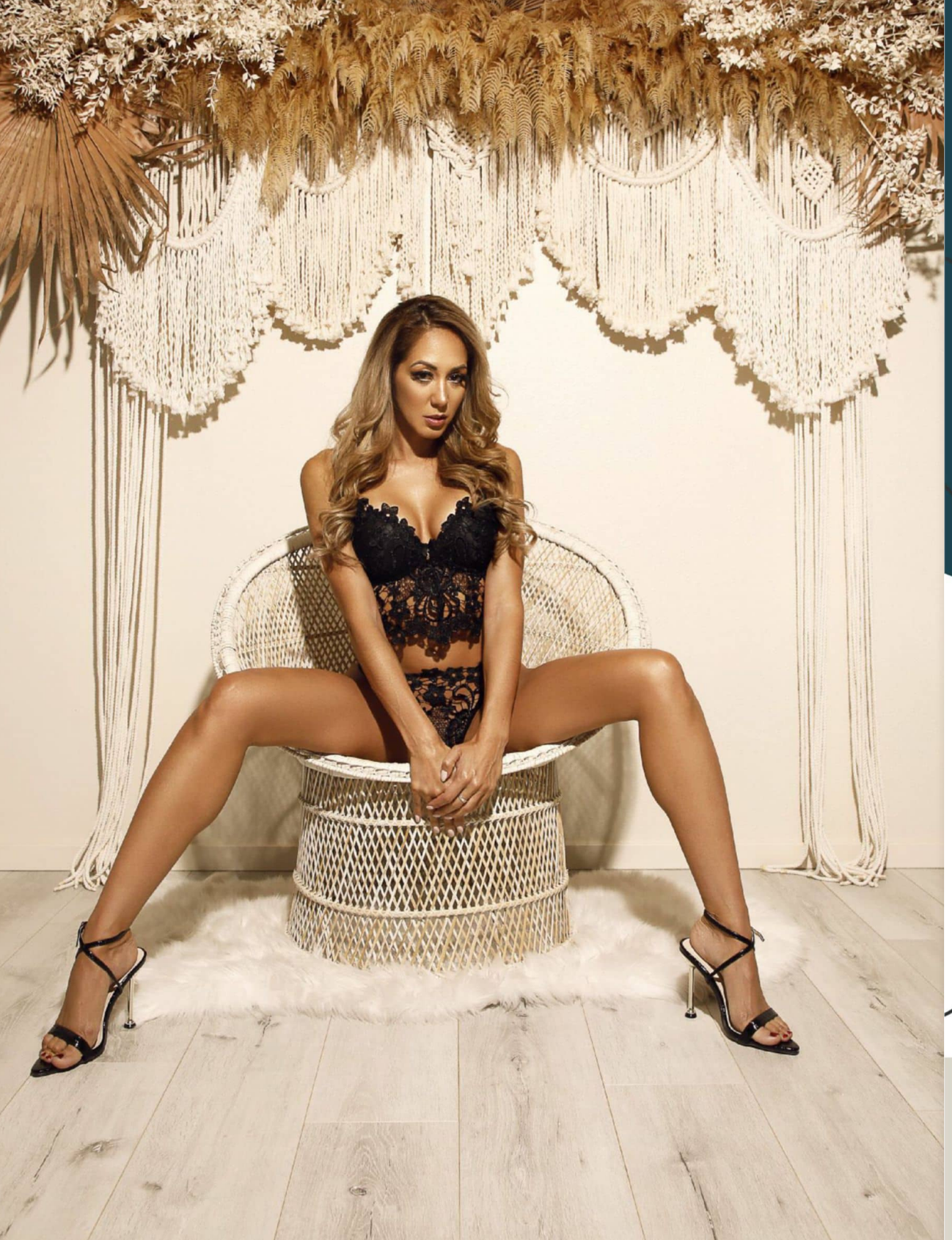
The Horror and The Future

In 2014, a mysterious game demo snuck onto the PlayStation Store called PT, without any fanfare or explanation what it was, gamers were intrigued. The premise was simple, a first-person horror game that saw you walking down the same corridor time and time again, but with each new round in the corridor some horrific things happen and it's up to you to figure out how to escape. P.T. was a terrifying experience, with many gamers rating it as still the scariest piece of horror gaming in history. Upon completing the horror experience, players were thrilled to discover that it was actually a teaser for Silent Hills, an upcoming game that saw the collaborative efforts between Kojima, filmmaker Guillermo del Toro, and famed Japanese horror artist, Junji Ito. It was a dream come true for any horror fan and the promise of those three individuals combining their craft to scare the socks off of us seemed too good to be true. Sadly that was exactly the case. In the background, Kojima and his team was developing a new Metal Gear title, a prequel called Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain. Unfortunately, Kojima's ambition got the better of him as tensions began to brew between Kojima and Konami. Reportedly, Konami felt Kojima may have been overshooting his ambitions with The Phantom Pain, leading to a lot more resources being poured into the project than usual. There were rumblings in the gaming industry that Kojima was planning to part ways with Konami, and in October 2015, the developer did just that. As a result of his departure, the final act for The Phantom Pain remained unfinished, and all development on Silent Hills was canceled. The messy breakup between Konami and Kojima reached fever pitch when he was infamously not allowed to attend The Game Awards in 2015 as Konami's lawyers forbid him from going to the ceremony to receive The Phantom Pain's award for Best Action Game. It was a sad ending to one of gaming's best collaborations and an end to what could have been one of the most exciting horror games ever created.

The rumor mill was out in full force, what would Kojima do now? Is he

ing to Xbox or will he leave gaming forever? Fortunately for everyone, Hideo Kojima was going nowhere, as at E3 2016 it was revealed that he joined forces with Sony Interactive Entertainment to re-establish Kojima Productions as an independent studio, stating that his first title would be a PlayStation 4 exclusive, title Death Stranding, a new project that saw the return of Silent Hills talents such as Guillermo del Toro and actor Norman Reedus. Death Stranding was swiftly and efficiently developed under Sony's banner, attracting other Hollywood actors such as Lea Seydoux and Mads Mikkelsen, along with previous Metal Gear Solid collaborator and voice actor Troy Baker. And true to form, Death Stranding was genre-breaking, a glorified hiking simulator that was as weird and as wonderful as one would expect from Kojima. The future of gaming is as bright as ever with an unleashed Hideo Kojima at the steering wheel.

Throughout his nearly 30 year career, Hideo Kojima has enthralled gamers from across the world, his games are truly groundbreaking, yet as divisive as games can be, the sign of a true auteur. Love or hate him, Hideo Kojima is one of the last remaining individual voices in the industry, a man that will create whatever his wonderful mind tells him and make the gaming scene one of the best entertainment platforms ever.



FHM

Angelina *Marie* Jamison

Model | @yoginiangelina
Photographer Ryan Dwyer | @letshoot
HMUA Bridget Martinez | @bridgetzglam
PR Services Mainstreet Productions | @mainstreetproductions

Such an absolute honor to have you feature on FHM! What has your journey as a certified bombshell been like so far? Awww that's so sweet...certified bombshell?! What a superlative compliment. Thank you.

My journey has not exactly been roses and sweet fragrant perfumes. It's actually been filled with many challenges and obstacles that I look at some serious life lessons that I have overcome. By keeping a positive attitude putting on a smile and doing the internal homework that is needed to heal and to be able to move forward in life. To be a positive inspiration and motivation to others and make a difference and allow your light to shine.

We are blown away by your drive and professionalism, can you tell us what some of the things that motivate you to stay on top of your game are? What motivates me is my 21-year-old daughter. Our children can be our greatest teachers if we listen. We give them life and in return they give us purpose. My daughter has taught me patience and so much more. She's my driving force to always wanting to improve and better myself. I hope that I am an inspiration to her to teach her that life is not always easy. We are presented with so many challenges and obstacles. And she came into this life and we were dealt some tough cards. But we overcame them with a positive mindset and a deeper understanding of life.

Top 3 best moments of your career? I just recently made my first cover of Las Vegas Entrepreneurs Magazine so that was very humbling. Having the opportunity to be featured in this international magazine FHM is such a huge honor. But most importantly having the opportunity to connect and meet with some of the world's greatest talented entrepreneurs and businessmen and women who support others along the way to lift others up.

What is your favorite chill time activity? I absolutely love to go to the lake to paddleboard and just float on the water. It is such a great pastime activity to do to decompress and re-charge. I also love going to experience different spas and treating myself to a good massage. Hiking and connecting to nature is also another one of my favorite activities.

We are taking you out on your ultimate date and we really want to knock this one out of the ballpark, what would that entail? Oh boy... hmmmm... well since you asked?!? My ultimate date if someone really wants to win my heart would be surprise tickets to somewhere tropical. I'm a beach bunny and I love the ocean. There's something magical about relaxing by the ocean with your toes in sand, the fragrance of saltwater in the air and a partner that is so open and communicative to wanting to learn more about me as I would them. Along with a nice romantic dinner and good wine and evening walks on the beach communicating about anything and everything that comes from the heart.

What are, hands down, your absolute favorite things to do? I'm spontaneous and always love a good adventure. I love to travel and explore new places. I love to connect with positive people who are on their journey in life, growing and evolving because there is always something we can learn from one another.

3 ultimate deal-breakers when it comes to men? Lack of communication, loyalty, integrity, morals, liars, and abusers and manipulators. Can't just name 3 so I will expand on this. Narcissistic individuals with massive egos if you're not coming from the heart. Then there's no need to be in each other's presence. I'm a very spiritual individual. I'm about the depth of soul if I see and feel red flags of childish behaviors and games. It's simple, I'll pull back and eventually cut the cord. I'm an evolved woman. I don't play games.

You have one last chance to do something you have always wanted to do, with no limits on anything, what are you doing? Well, later this next year I plan on jumping out of a plane (skydiving) with my daughter and hopefully soon traveling the world and exploring new cultures to expand my horizons and my mind.

Where would you say is your favorite place to be in the world and why? My favorite place to be in the world is to just be centered in my heart space. Because that is where truth and peace reside and my dreams manifest into reality and that is where God resides. Because when I am in that place of love everything else seems to manifest right before me. And it seems to be working so far.

What is currently playing on loop on your playlist? When I'm in a chill mood I love listening to ambient music. Right now Vargo, Kinobe, Cafe Del Mar, Songs of Eden. And I just love Alina Baraz. Her voice is so angelic.

When I'm at the gym I've got to play Masked Wolf "Astronaut in the Ocean" It gets me going and then ATB, Tiesto, Steve Aoki, just to name a few.

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? Instagram @yoginiangelina
I'm currently working on some new yoga content for YouTube. Where I can be found at "Yogini Angelina"

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers... Wherever you go. Go with all your heart. People will judge you they will criticize you they will troll your social media and leave negative comments or DM's but that's an easy fix. Delete and block! But the reality is they're watching you because your light is shining. We are all diamonds with many facets so keep SHINING YOUR BRILLIANCE!

F'NG FAB TABS

The very best tablets available right now!

The tablet craze from 10 years ago might have subsided, and with the boom in smartphone technology and smartphone sizes has rendered the need for a tablet nearly obsolete. However, companies are still pumping out amazing tablets which offer various unique functions and a great alternative to a clunky laptop. With that said here is a list of the best tablets you can buy right now in 2021.

iPad Pro 12.9

Arguably the best tablet available right now, the iPad Pro 12.9 is an absolute powerhouse. Featuring the M1 chipset found in Apple's high-end Macs, this is the closest a tablet has ever gotten to matching a desktop in performance. The screen is also top of the range, offering a Mini LED screen with 1,600-nit peak brightness, a 120Hz refresh rate, and a 2048 x 2732 resolution. Coupled with very good battery life, an above-average camera and the expected solid Apple design, the iPad Pro 21.9 is a must for tablet power users. However, that power does come with a big price tag and the tablet itself is rather big and bulky. If you're looking for a more portable tablet then you might want to look elsewhere.

Samsung Galaxy Tab S7 Plus

For Android fans out there, Samsung has delivered a tablet that rivals the mighty iPad Pro in the Galaxy Tab S7 Plus. What sets the S7 Plus apart from its rivals is its incredible screen, delivering a 12.4-inch Super AMOLED with a 2800 x 1752 resolution and a 120Hz refresh rate, which beats out the iPad rival in sheer quality. Equipped with a Qualcomm Snapdragon 865 Plus chipset, the S7 Plus is extremely powerful and will handle anything you throw at it. The premium metal build is also fantastic, with a slim design to offer a slick look. It also comes with 5G connectivity, so if you're in need of high-speed internet performance then look no further. It is rather expensive, but considering what you get the price is understandable. However, if you don't get on with the Android interface and apps then this tablet won't change your mind.

Lenovo Tab P11 Pro

The Lenovo brand might be better associated with mid to low range tablets, however, with the P11 Pro, Lenovo delivers a wonderful premium tablet. Considering this table is considerably cheaper than it's Samsung and Apple equivalents, it offers one of the best screens on the market. Offering an 11.5-inch 1600 x 2560 OLED display with HDR10 support, perfect for anyone who uses their tablets for visual media. Speaker quality is generally a thorny issue for tablet users, yet the P11 Pro offers four powerful speakers that deliver great quality audio. Make no mistake, the P11 Pro is a mid-range tablet, lacking the camera quality and power that the more expensive options offer, but if you use your tablet purely for media consumption, then this well-priced offering from Lenovo is the perfect fit.

Microsoft Surface Pro

For years, many people firmly believed that the tablet will replace laptops. Of course that never really happened, but with the Surface Pro you can see why many held that belief. The Surface Pro comes with a fully-featured version of Windows 10 and feels and acts just like a normal PC laptop would. Sadly the Surface Pro does not come with the vastly improved Surface Pen or the keyboard attachment, which is a shame considering the high price for the tablet, but if you want the PC experience in tablet form then the Surface Pro delivers. It's a wonderful piece of kit for creatives and with the additional add-ons, the Surface Pro becomes an essential purchase.

iPad Mini

The smallest tablet in the iPad range, the Mini has always been a fantastic option for people looking for a more portable experience. The new Mini comes with a more modern design and an increase in screen size, jumping up to 8.3 inches over the 7.9 inches from its predecessors. The Mini has also seen a considerable increase in power and with 5G support for super-fast internet access. Unfortunately with great power comes great battery usage and that is the one area the Mini fails to perform. Compared to similar tablets on the market the battery life is weak, however, if you want the iPad experience in the palm of your hand then the Mini is the perfect option for you.

Samsung Galaxy Tab S6 Lite

Naturally not everyone has hundreds of dollars to throw at a tablet and fortunately, Samsung has you covered if you're on a tight budget. The S6 Lite is the scaled-down version of the S6, featuring a robust design and with the wonderful S pen as standard. Instead of scaling down on size, Samsung opted to deliver on size rather than performance, so don't expect crazy fast performance or the greatest camera on the S6 Lite. However, you do get one of the best tablets at an incredibly low price. And even though the performance can be sluggish now and again, the S6 Lite still offers a great tablet experience for a considerably lower price.

A SLIDE INTO SWINGING...

By Ian Kirke | Twitter @ianjkirke

I recently linked my in-car audio system to Spotify. How rock n' roll am I? I often create my own montage of hits whilst thumping the steering wheel and singing aloud, or just humming when I don't know the words. I'll even fess up to getting a few lyrics totally wrong, although to be fair I have never plumbed the depths of those tone-deaf music lovers who, according to research conducted by New Musical Express in 2016, we're convinced that a certain Dire Straits classic contained the line, "Money for nothin' and chips for free." Of course, the correct line is, "Money for nothin' and your chicks for free." I would concede that I am trapped in a melody time warp as my music tastes gravitate towards the '80s, and I also drive a BMW. Make of that last piece of intelligence what you wish but the reason I say this is that it has a built-in Alexa (well the BMW version). I simply say, "Hi BMW, play ...," and I can listen to any track I wish! For an older guy, this is pure wizardry!

Listening intently to the opening salvo of 'We close our eyes' by the legendary Go West (who, incidentally, were featured in the soundtrack to Pretty Woman, the enduring 1990's film, with the track 'The King of Wishful thinking') my brain made a series of connections...
Inside everyone hides one desire.
Outside no one would know.
Danger close to the edge of the knife...
(We Close Our Eyes lyrics © Sony/ATV Music Publishing (UK) Limited)

I certainly had and still have desires. Most of the former I have turned into reality. Some were better than expected, whilst others were a total letdown. This thought experiment may have been a fleeting moment in an otherwise forgetful car journey, but as I reflected upon the last time I had seen Go West, at Shrewsbury Rocks in 2018, the cognitive cogs cranked up a gear. Wasn't Shrewsbury at one time in its distant history a Roman settlement? Them lot were into orgies, weren't they?

Those Romans loved to fuck, and on an industrial scale too. Indeed, the Roman historian Titus Livius Patavinus (known as Livy), born circa 59BC in the city of Patavium, described sex in terms of both political and historical significance. From the birth of Rome in 753BC, and throughout the annals – not to be confused with a most popular sexual act that men would indulge in with both sexes and, if so minded, with animals too – of the Roman Empire, sex was, literally, fucking important.

Polysexuality (being attracted to multiple genders) was also commonplace and it wasn't unusual for married couples to maintain such relationships without unsettling the domestic status-quo. Throw in the orgies, the love of porn, and incest, amongst other sexual acts, and one has to ponder how the fuck they had time to conquer, at the time, nearly a quarter of the world's population?

I smiled to myself and wondered what it must have been like to have so much sex with virtually anyone, the exception being any women on women action, since surprisingly, lesbianism was deemed to be unacceptable. You didn't even have to make an effort! Wake up, screw the wife, pop over to the neighbors, hump them, all before attending your mate's stag-party orgy? Maybe I was fortunate to not have been born in an era where my cock was likely to be eroded by the time I had reached my late twenties and the chances of catching some form of sexually transmitted infection was more or less routine.

But then again was there not a modern-day equivalence to Roman sexual culture? Perhaps not as obvious, but nonetheless simmering below the surface?

I had heard of swinging but to be perfectly honest, in my alter ego of Viscount Vanilla, I didn't really have much of a handle on it. Was it a form of clandestine homage to the ancient Romans? Or were swingers just more in tune with their sexual desires? There was only one way to find out.

Through the wonder of social media, flashing my journalistic credentials along the way, I was soon, courtesy of a friend of a friend, in the midst of a band of experienced swingers. With pen cocked and sitting comfortably (dressed to the left) I questioned my banging brigade.

To the uninitiated how would you describe swinging?

Nikki was eager to answer this one first, "Swinging is a lifestyle choice. It's something to have a serious think about before jumping in with both feet. I dipped my toes in first". This was reassuring in that I wasn't expected to dip anything into anyone at the start. No immediate Roman-style rollicking, with my bollocks slapping against a total stranger. She continued, smiling at my excited yet totally inaccurate assumption, "I researched the subject. Found out about FabSwingers website and signed up". Craig took up where she had left off, "Swinging is a sexually liberating thing. It really changes your whole perception on sex and relationships and the link between love and sex". This sounded damn logical but surely some form of emotional line is always crossed when people have sex together? Or was I confusing this with love? I was confused! As I deliberated Phoebe pounced, "You get to have sex with lots of hot guys and girls. No strings attached (NSA) - what's not to love?!" Brian and Sarah gave an insight into nuances of naughtiness which surprised me, "Swinging is being open to the idea that there can be more to sex than just behind closed doors nooky between people within an existing relationship. It is not just 'partner swapping,' it can cover exhibitionism, voyeurism, threesomes, moresomes, group-play and even flirting and socialization". Blimey! Maybe I had inadvertently entered the fray without evening knowing it, since I liked to socialize and had been known to flirt, but very rarely had this led to sex. Then again, there was that time in Banbury! Patricia added, "Watching, taking part in someone else's pleasures, curtains, towels and dressing up". Was this a connection to those Romans?!

And there was 'dogging' too – the practice of watching or

engaging in sexual activity in public places – surely this had to be a summer sport? If not, I would personally insist on keeping my jumper on at least! According to urban myth, this alfresco pursuit became so named as typically, when a passer-by was challenged by an amorous group, they would state that they were walking their pooch. My mind was beginning to boggle, although I was keen to establish how these very ordinary folk had seen and followed the swinging light.

What is the story of your introduction to swinging?

Brian explained, "I worked away from home a lot and used to get cabin fever from being in my hotel all the time. I plucked up the courage to attend a club and after an eye-opening beginning, found it a great way to socialize in an environment where you can guarantee that people won't be bent over their phone!" He had a point, although wouldn't you at least want to send a Tweet or update your status on Facebook? Perhaps not, but linking up via reputable swinging sites would always rely on a stable broadband connection, as Phoebe picked up on, "My introduction to swinging was via a site. I'd been thinking of it for a while as I have a really high sex drive!"

Craig took me a little by surprise (not in any carnal way) when he added, "Mine was plucking up the courage to tell my then wife that I had a fantasy of seeing her have sex with someone else. I was surprised that she was happy to oblige. I didn't know how to go about doing this, so I did an internet search, found a website, and took it from there". That took some bollocks Craig! I did however wonder if his reference to his ex had anything to do with his continuous devotion to this form of liberty of the libido? Nikki's disclosure did little to throw me off the scent, "I started four and a half years ago, two years as a couple and the rest single. I was in a marriage, and we discussed it at length. We were told by a friend about a swinging convention in a hotel in Blackpool and asked him for the website. We went to a club first and that was nerve-wracking! However, we were welcomed, it was friendly with no pressure and lots of fun! We didn't play at first but went back again when we joined in! Same room swap. What a lot of fun that was! My first of many MMF's (male, male, female). We are separated now and I'm a very happy single

woman on a mission to visit clubs all over the country and Europe!" Although COVID-19 has put the mockers on much overseas swinging I couldn't help but wonder if Boris Johnson's BREXIT deal had any provisions for this? Then again, the mere thought of the UK's Prime Minister was enough to make me gag, in a wholly non-sexual way.

Is there a swinging etiquette?

The consensus was no means no, and the women are always in charge. Nikki added, "People should always ask to partake in any fun that may be happening". Patricia continued, "Single females are known as unicorns whilst single males must ask the husband's permission." This sounded very British, and all above board to me!

What are your most memorable swinging experiences?

Nikki was first with her hand up (no, not there!) as the broadest of grins dominated her impish face, "I have so many! My first MMF! It was always a fantasy and it happened! I love the feeling that I'm the one they want. I get more and more fantasies and my sexual prowess grows. Making women have amazing orgasms is another huge turn-on for me!" I was struggling to keep up as I sat more awkwardly in my chair and attempted to process this deluge of devilish disclosure. With little sign of abating, until that is I raised my hand for her to draw breath she gleefully added, "Oh and my first ever bukkake, wow!" A quick internet search reminded me of the comedian Micky Flanagan who made me laugh out loud at Wembley with his routine about the same deed resembling a plasterer's radio.

Phoebe muscled in and talked bondage, "I rented a BDSM room there and wow! Within a couple of hours I was upstairs on the PVC bed restrained and being whipped by two guys who took turns in using me! It was amazing!".

All this high-octane action was brought to a momentary pause when Brian and Sarah recalled the time they met as swingers and eventually fell in love. I smiled since I instinctively knew that any form of intimacy with another human being has to be a game-changer, or am I just an emotional twerp? On this occasion, I was simply happy for them.

Are there any drawbacks?

My resident couple progressed the narrative with a poignant reflection, "As a couple, swinging can enhance a relationship, but it can strain it, especially with a lack of good communication and respect of each other's boundaries". Nikki gave credence

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this risk, “Relationships can break up as did my own. He is now dating a woman he used to meet”. Phoebe identified another red flag, “In my experience, some guys don’t seem to understand the term NSA. I’ve had a few stalker situations!”

Craig brought some welcome levity to the conversation when he piped up, “Doing this as a single male is hard because there are so many men out there. You have to stand out”. Perhaps this issue alone immediately disqualified me.

Do you serve tea and sandwiches at appropriate intervals?
I was reassured that sustenance was an important swinging convention, often with the provision of buffets. Although Nikki provided some much-needed caution, “I don’t know where those fingers have been so I tend to leave the buffet!” before adding, “My favorite club you can order food! The toasties are amazing for providing a bit of energy at around midnight to keep going!”

Is it an overt lifestyle choice for you or does it exist under the radar?
Overwhelmingly my cohort of sexual libertarians had decided to keep their swinging lifestyle undercover, citing potential discord within their employment. Closer to home Brian admitted, “My close family knows with various levels of tolerance and support”. Nikki, effervescent and pragmatic as ever, added, “It’s a lifestyle choice. I have friends and family who know what I do. And as a single woman when I have “meets” I tell at least two friends where I am going. Safety first!”

How do non-swingers respond when they discover your sexual activities?
I wasn’t that surprised that the principal echo was one of astonishment. And it got me thinking – how do you introduce such a topic in the first place? The shock and awe tactic or a more subtle approach, if one ever existed – “Darling do you fancy a threesome with Marjorie after Mah-jong this evening?”
Nikki admitted, “A few family members were shocked and said it was not a good choice (I no longer speak to them). My vanilla friends ask me a lot of questions and are always interested about what I’ve done and what places I have been to”.

So, where has this journey into previously unknown territory taken me? The fantasy element is persuasive, yet my internal chronometer reflects a more prudish posture. This is evidenced by the fact that I don’t like getting into a crowded swimming pool, even with my Speedos firmly on! I’m also cautious of unnecessary peril. I prefer being in a stable, loving relationship and even if my significant other egged me on to sample the swinging scene would I regret it? My postgraduate life is firmly rooted within the discipline of risk, and the perceived threat aligned to my personal vulnerability leads me to the conclusion that I will watch from a distance. But then again that is voyeuristic! Maybe I have latent tendencies after all! Then there are the buffets! Damn, has anyone seen my dog collar and lead?

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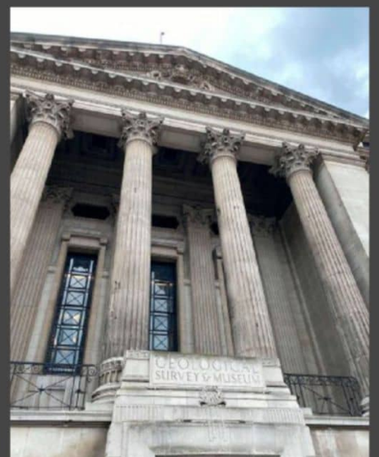
wow!

By Ian Kirke | Twitter @ianjkirke

Come with me on a journey connecting the solar system with the ground beneath your feet. No, go even deeper than that to the very core. The DNA that makes you you; where the past, present, and future collide in a triumphant spectacle of the molecular and the mega; where life, death and the very essence of creation occupy a magical auditorium of cathedral elegance; where the mysteries of nature are forensically explored, documented, and revered with skill, passion, and love; where the disparate strands of the earth elements, wildlife, minerals and flora, and the matter between and around meet in an explosion of vivid wonder and enchantment. The epicentre of this pure brilliant energy? The Natural History Museum, London.

I had been invited to this most unique place by the effervescent Gerry Hey, head of collection management systems, and as I awaited her arrival at the Exhibition Road entrance, I took a moment to drink in the splendour of the architecture. I had been here many times; as a curious kid with my parents, on several school trips, and later in life with my children too – not forgetting the times I had visited on my own when in the capital on business. Yet today was going to be different as I would be offered glimpses of what lay behind and below the public galleries. When speaking to Gerry beforehand I hadn't grasped the fact that the museum was primarily a global research facility with only part of the building given over to exhibition space. Of the eighty million specimens only around one percent are actually on display. What secrets lay within the concealed labyrinths of this most iconic structure, designed by the relatively unknown architect Alfred Waterhouse, which opened to the masses in 1881? This uncertainty elevated my usual anticipation to a whole new level, and I felt like that excited kid all over again.

With notepad and pen in hand, I excitedly followed Gerry to the first exhibit – a stunning Stegosaurus, framed within bursts of complimentary light giving this particular dinosaur an almost rock star image. Anyway, why shouldn't it strut its stuff? The most intact Stegosaurus skeleton ever found had much to brag about.



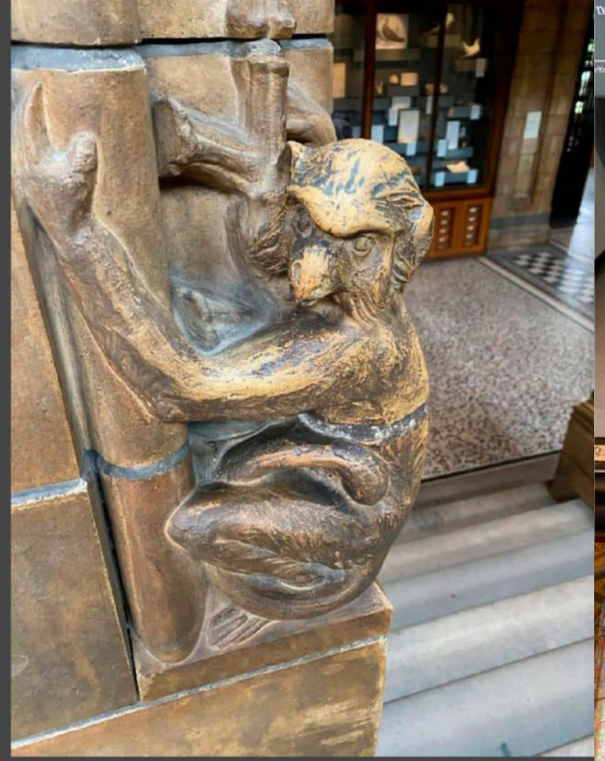
Passing the elegantly displayed birds Gerry pointed out the definitive link that ties dinosaurs to every avian species, including the annoying yet benign pigeons outside, causing a complete hijack of my focus. I had seen a facsimile as a kid, aged maybe five or six, brought to my school eons ago and had obviously bypassed it here previously en route to the gravitational pull of the much larger former rulers of the earth. Although much smaller in comparison to Tyrannosaurus Rex, Archaeopteryx your legacy still flies above us, and often shits on my car.

Entering 'Fossil Way,' a corridor of wall-to-wall extinct life, my host stopped at a dolphin-like creature called an Ichthyosaur. This long-gone species was momentarily brought back to vivid life as this female had died during childbirth. As Gerry explained that exhaustive forensic analysis had identified this poignant spec of history when a mother had come to grief, her offspring became visible to my untrained eye. I was beginning to realise that this place is about more than looking – it holds so many secrets that are, ironically, on full public display. I just needed to slow down and breath it all in. I was becoming aware that I had previously been guilty of lack of attention to the stories around me that just required a little more awareness. I was trying to make the odd journalistic note, but somehow, I knew that this experience was more emotional and that my reflections would be embedded within my memory. Like the narrowband radio signal detected on August 15th, 1977, by the Ohio State University's Big Ear radio telescope in the United States this was becoming my "WOW!" moment. Coupled to the discovery of these incredible specimens were the identities of those who had found them, painstakingly removing the fossil by untangling the mass of matter and often reconstructing the animal for public review. Exhumation of

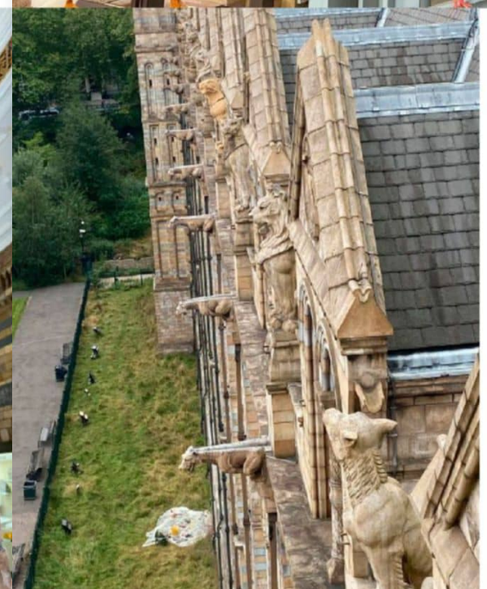
dinosaur remains is never simply a case of unearthing a body – the twisted heritage of earth's history could only ever be properly understood by the dedication and brilliance of the palaeontologists. Many were women, forced by the regressive convention of the time to report under male pseudonyms.

As we walked towards Gerry's favourite place – The Mineral Gallery – she asked for my opinion about the monkeys. I was puzzled since I couldn't see any, but I was guilty of being present without seeing. Adorning the edges of the walls either side of the colossal entrance gallery, where 'Hope' the magnificent Blue Whale captures the very heartbeat of this guardian of the known galaxy, are a series of carved monkeys. Rumour has it that each unique face represents previous curators.

Turning left into the mineral collection the Ostro Stone shimmered like a suspended orb of heavenly matter, absorbing light like a translucence thief before it ricocheted into my retina reminiscent of a prize fighters punch – the world's largest treated intense blue, faceted topaz. Standing guard over the rows of its inert cousins, cumulatively this collection captured the very fabric of the earth.



Sweeping into The Vault, home of some of nature's most unique and valuable treasures, Gerry outlined the key relationships with, amongst others, NASA. In this place moon rock and meteorites jostled for attention with the Winchcombe meteorite merited as the first to have fallen and been recovered in the United Kingdom for over thirty years. Landing on a residential driveway, this specimen is rightly held in scientific esteem since most alien rocks simply disintegrate, especially in suburban locations where the chances of colliding with other rigid structures is more likely. I then twigged why most were located in desert regions! In an almost casual manner Gerry mentioned the meteorite in the basement, which was being studied for signs of bacterial longevity. A rather painstaking analysis with the next review earmarked for June 30th, 2514, but nonetheless incredible! "Was this evidence of life?" I spluttered. She smiled, "We only deal in facts, not speculation." With head still spinning my disorientation was calmed a little when the fish with the extra fins were pointed out. In view but obscured by the current attack on my sensory perception, were tiles upon the columns of the gallery containing the novelty so coveted by the builders. It was as if they wanted to add contradiction and comedy within the very annals of scientific authority. The building had a history all its own, and one to which, hitherto, I had been completely oblivious.



Stopping in front of a large glass-fronted display cabinet my gaze was drawn to the journals and elegantly inscribed manuals cataloguing countless expeditions. I initially missed the mummified cat, found in the 1970's in the basement during refurbishment. In the early part of the twentieth century cats were employed to keep the mice population at bay, since these pesky rodents loved to chew through the priceless manuscripts. I was disappointed to learn that this feline protector had not been named. Later that day I searched for an appropriate Latin name. I will certainly check in on you next time 'Custos' (Latin for guardian) the cat.

Prior to leaving the main galleries Gerry stopped and asked me what linked a host of vibrantly coloured birds. That was easy – they were the descendants of dinosaurs. Not quite the answer she was seeking! Another failed attempt followed – "They are all edible?" OK, I was technically correct on both counts albeit the flamboyance was masculine. They were all males, displaying their wares to the less brightly coloured females of the species, seeking to secure the opportunity to reproduce. In contrast, humanity had cast the female of the species as the more desirable, not only to the eye but inextricably linked to the very mechanisms of sexual reproduction. Indeed, humans are a rarity as sex also occurs for pleasure. A contradiction of nature, save, according to my learned friend, a handful of apes. But then, how any female wanted sex with me is an even bigger paradox! As I was ushered into the Mary Anning Rooms, I was given the most precious views of the façade of this magnificent monument. The gargoyles and symbols to nature, hidden from ordinary public gaze, dominated the vantage point. This had to be the coolest place on earth to work!

One of Museums primary goals is to digitise those splendid source documents and specimens, penned by the great explorers of the natural world, including Charles Darwin. This meticulous and methodical preservation allowed me to virtually flick harmlessly through the handwritten chronicles with the original tomes in view but housed behind protective glass screens in the correct ambient temperatures. The magic of technology had been harnessed and I was also now in Darwin's cabin upon HMS Beagle. Performing a digital autopsy of a bee followed by a bug allowed me to immerse myself in the intricacies and beauty of the most mundane of creatures. Even the common housefly looked majestic, and I wondered if my usual default position of simply swatting them if they became imprisoned in my home would be undertaken with the same vigour ever again.

One of the more unusual remits of the museum is the undertaking of post-mortems on all unexplained marine casualties and animal murders in partnership with the Zoological Society of London. Gerry acknowledged my double take

and quickly filled the momentary silence. For example, on one gruesome occasion a pregnant sealion was found to have been shot twice in the head. A repulsive example of the sinister and unique flaw within the human psyche. The Santa Clause mystery, although similarly tragic, nonetheless provided another important forensic narrative. Following a plane crash, on a date not too far from the main December gig, an engine was submitted for analysis since initial visual inspections concluded that the aircraft had struck a reindeer! Could it be? The team reviewed the facts and determined that an eagle had been sucked into the engine and a portion of one of Santa's sleigh pulling relatives had actually been consumed by the bird of prey. Chatting to a couple of Gerry's colleagues I happened to divulge that I wrote features for some of the racier publications, later resulting in an explosion of messages in the team WhatsApp group. The upshot was that clarification of the presence of lube on some desks was deemed necessary, at least for my enlightenment. The answer? It is useful for mounting. What's new I thought? Exhibits, that is. I stood suitably corrected.

Crossing over to 'The Spirit Collection' the discrete animal carvings were once again pointed out. This time snakes, and latterly birds, hugged the contours. I promised myself that on my next visit I would focus on the interior first before contemplating the exhibits. The collection of jars, full of the most bizarre, beguiling, and beautiful specimens stretched as far as the eye could see. Some many hundreds of years old housed in the protective fluids that keep these wonders in continued suspended elegance. Gerry explained that the majority must be regularly decanted in order to preserve the delicate objects for future generations and continued research. Some modern-day diseases have a legacy often stretching back centuries. Even bats from China, the epicentre of COVID-19, were on site. The Natural History Museum is at the forefront of protecting humanity and the fragile ecosystems sharing this awesome planet. It was incredible to note that of all the eminent scientists who had documented, labelled, and entombed these creatures within the fluid suspensions, one individual had maintained the most frequency of stable jars. That man? Darwin again. Even his original handwritten labels still held firm. As I bade farewell to this repository of natural riches, I noticed a large jar crammed full of what appeared to be pasta. This was no foodstuff – in fact, the complete opposite – the longest ever recorded tapeworm.

Sitting in one of the most ornate of cafeterias, Gerry with a cappuccino and me with a cup of tea, I asked what her outlook is for planet earth. Are we heading for extinction along with many of the incredible life forms that inhabit the place we call home? Or is there a more optimistic future? Gerry drew upon her previous life within the discipline of commercial oil and gas exploration, an almost compelling counter narrative to the values of the museum and painted a more hopeful future. Her testimony lent significant credence to the power of education. The more we know about the natural world, the better informed we are and the more able as a species to have a positive relationship with mother nature. A story of hope? Was that why the resplendent resident blue whale had been so named? My time with Gerry reconnected me to my past but also reminded me of the future I would like to participate in.

If you haven't been, then simply go. If you have been, go again. And if you are in the second category, go once again but this time explore the architecture of this extraordinary building too. Finally, keep future diary dates to do the same and take someone else with you. The Natural History Museum is a dynamic place that continues to fascinate, educate, and thrill. Go on – say it – WOW!

Rachel ANNE

Model @Livefitlove00
Photography by Arthur St. John | @ArthurStJohn
HMUA Taylor Jazz | @Taylor_Jazz

Tell us something interesting about yourself people would not ordinarily know about you. I'm certified in Pilates and yoga instruction and used to teach hot yoga classes. Fitness and whole-body health is my passion and my dedication in life.

If you weren't a model, what would you be? Between modeling full time and running am online clothing boutique I stay pretty busy. But if I had to start all over, I would have gone to veterinary school to be an emergency doctor for animals in need.

Who is your celeb crush? I've never really been one to crush on celebrities but two A-listers that really inspire me are Howard and Beth Stern. Besides a beautiful and happy relationship, the amount of time, love and resources they donate to animal charities is truly incredible.

What is the one thing about yourself that you wish more people knew? I am one of the most down to earth people you could ever meet. I'm my happiest in sweats and sneakers, and I love getting my hands dirty. I'm not afraid to put in work to get where I want and what I want in life.
What does your typical day look like? I get up every day bright and early to hit the gym. Two hours at a minimum keeps me mentally and physically feeling my best. After that I dive straight into listings & photography for my online business. I model my own pieces, handle the web listings, and do all the packaging and shipping as well. I love working from home, with three of the most adorable furry co-workers at my feet. My adopted kitties are my world. Weeknights I am either volunteering with pet adoptions, or in the kitchen. I love to cook, and I find it to be one of my most favorite creative outlets.

When you are not busy modelling, what is your favourite thing to do? I love decorating and organizing in my home. I find beauty and peace in the quiet time, and I love the zen of beautiful home after a busy workday.

Which three words best describe you? Focused, intelligent, and strong.

Were you excited to shoot this feature? 2021 has been a whirlwind of door opening opportunities for me. I am beyond grateful for each and every one. The opportunity to shoot for FHM was definitely another one of my dreams coming true.

Do you have anyone special in your life? Tell us a bit more. I do. Having that one person in your life that supports you and your career is important to me and I'm so grateful to have that. Happiness starts in the home, and it gives you the foundation to push further every day.

Where to from here? What are your plans for the future? If things calm down for my schedule this winter, I would love to work on the book I started writing a few years back. I've been through so much in my career to get myself where I am today. Ideally, a vacation to a tropical island and some quiet time to put this incredible journey on paper and get it published. With palm trees behind me and a few new passport stamps

CR7

The Rise of Ronaldo

In soccer terms, there are two players who are seen as the greatest of all time, Argentina's Lionel Messi and Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo. The discussion between who is the G.O.A.T. has led to family feuds, bar room brawls and numerous Twitter wars comparing the two soccer legends. However, this story is not about who is the greatest, but instead is focussing on one of the greatest, in Cristiano Ronaldo, who recently made worldwide news headlines, as he returned to the club that made him famous all those years ago, Manchester United. But how did an awkward Portuguese youth turn into arguably the greatest player to ever grace the sport?

By Ian Kirke | Twitter @ianjkirke

From Reagan to Lisbon.

Born on February 5th, 1985, in Funchal Madeira, Cristiano Ronaldo dos Santos Aveiro, was the youngest of four children. His father, José Dinis Aveiro worked as an equipment manager at the local soccer club, Clube Desportivo Nacional da Madeira. His father was a big Ronald Reagan fan, a former actor who became US president in the '80s, and as a nod of respect to his favorite actor, José added the Ronaldo part to Cristanio's name. Having been exposed to soccer from an early age, the young Ronaldo took to it immediately, favoring practicing football over his school work. However, Ronaldo's early childhood life would be shaped by hardship as his father often drank too much, which meant his mother would have to take on two jobs, a cleaner and cook, to be able to support and feed the four children. The young boy would beg with his favor to seek help and enter rehab, sadly his father never took that advice.

As tough as his personal life might have been, Ronaldo found the perfect outlet to escape the hardships in soccer, by the age of 10 he was already hailed by many as a future champion. His godfather, Fernao Sousa, told British journalists once that "All he wanted to do as a boy was play soccer, he loved the game so much he'd miss meals or escape out of his bedroom window with a ball when he was supposed to be doing his homework." However, his soccer antics would soon come to a crashing halt, as the 15-year-old was diagnosed with a heart condition that required surgery, fortunately, the surgery was a success and he would soon return to the one palace he loved, the soccer field. His first taste of "professional" football would be for his local club Clube Desportivo Nacional da Madeira, but soccer scouts quickly saw his talent, and he was signed to one of the biggest clubs in Portugal, Sporting Clube de Portugal (known as Sporting Lisbon), where he played for that club's various youth teams before making his debut on Sporting's first team in 2002.

The Big Break

While playing for Sporting Lisbon, Ronaldo was the talk of the Portuguese soccer scene, and the rest of Europe was starting to take notice. Early in 2003, Ronaldo seemed destined for the English Premier League team, Arsenal. He even traveled to north London to meet the then manager, Arsene Wenger, and have a tour of the club's training ground, but the clubs ultimately could not agree upon a deal. It left Wenger to lament in 2014 to Goal.com's Liam Twomey, "My biggest regret? I was so close to signing Cristiano Ronaldo. [...] That, of course, still hurts today." Instead of heading to Arsenal, the young wunderkind would be scooped up by their biggest rivals, Manchester United.

The Red Devils were already in the process of agreeing to an informal alliance with Sporting, ostensibly to share advice on scouting, training and player development. The real intention was to give United first refusal on the talent from Sporting's youth teams, including access to the ultimate prize: Cristiano Ronaldo. As a part of this arrangement, United agreed to play Sporting CP in a pre-season friendly to open Sporting's new stadium in August 2003, which had been built ahead of staging several games in the following year's European Championship. Ronaldo would make an instant impact against his future team, tearing right-back defender John O'Shea to pieces in the first half, impressing everyone on and off the pitch. At half-time, legendary United manager Alex Ferguson told Manchester United chief executive Peter Kenyon,

"We're not leaving this ground until we've got that boy signed." A few days later, Ronaldo and his family, accompanied by his agent Jorge Mendes, were on a private jet to Manchester to sign his United contract.

From Shy Teenager to The Best in The World

The young teenager would make an instant impact on the training field, impressing his fellow teammates and it would not be long before the 18-year-old would become a regular starter for the European giants. CR7 as he would become known amongst his fans, soon proved why Ferguson would stop at nothing to sign him. Ronaldo wasted little time in showing off his sublime skills with a stunning 30-minute debut against Bolton at Old Trafford in August 2003. There was a buzz of excitement as soon as he stepped off the bench and, after 39 appearances and eight goals that season, including the opener in the 3-0 FA Cup final win over Millwall, he was named Sir Matt Busby Player of the Year. Although his second year at the club would not quite live up to the hype he still managed to turn in 9 goals by the end of the season. In 2005/06 Ronaldo again reserved his best form for the latter stages, but the inconsistencies of a developing young player were being ironed out. He departed, full of hope and with great expectations, for the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany - what turned out to be a truly defining moment in his career. In the quarter-finals, Portugal met England and, after Wayne Rooney's sending off, Ronaldo became the pantomime villain for the English press. Some doubted he would return to Manchester. But Sir Alex assured him any ill-feeling would blow over. It happened with Eric Cantona and David Beckham. Ronaldo met the inevitable boos with the best football of his life.

United's title success in 2006/2007 was a team effort, but one man took the lead role in every major plotline. It began with a 5-1 win over Fulham, Ronaldo and Rooney ran the show and publicly banished claims they were at odds. Dazzling wing-play was backed with regular assists and crucial goals. His form that season brought a glut of individual accolades

and, despite interest from other clubs, most notably Real Madrid, he extended his contract until 2012. But the young Portuguese soccer master would improve, even more, scoring a staggering 42 goals in all competitions. In May 2008 he fired United to domestic and European glory; scoring a decisive penalty on the final day of the league campaign and a powerful header in the Champions League final in Moscow. His individual performances saw him achieve a clean sweep of club and domestic individual honors, with global gongs soon to follow. At Euro 2008, Ronaldo's United future was again in doubt, however, he would put an end to the rumors when he pledged his allegiance to United, although ankle surgery delayed his start to the 2008/09 campaign. He made his return as a substitute against Villarreal in the Champions League and was given a rousing home reception. Two months later, his 100th Reds goal arrived against Stoke City on 15 November 2008.

Ronaldo's magical 2008 was rounded off with another string of individual honors. In October he was named FIFPro Player of the Year, and in December became the first United player since George Best in 1968 to be awarded the prestigious Ballon d'Or trophy, the first of many to come.. To cap it off, in January 2009, he became the first United player to win the FIFA World Player of the Year award. "This is the climax of a fantastic era," he said. "I'm lucky to be part of United's history. It's one of the most important moments of my life, I hope to be back in this position again." While Ronaldo did not dominate on the field in 2008/09 to the same degree as he did in 2007/08, he still played a significant role as the Reds achieved a hat-trick of league titles and reached a second successive European Cup final. For example, Cristiano scored in all three knock-out rounds of the Champions League, including the club's Goal of the Season to defeat Porto in the quarter-final second leg in his native Portugal and a double in the semi-final second leg against Arsenal. In his final appearance at Old Trafford, Ronaldo received his third championship medal after the Reds sealed the title with a point against Arsenal.

Spain to Italy to Back Home

Although rumors were floating around that Ronaldo was about to exit Old Trafford, there were still many that believed he would stay on, however, that all changed on 11 June 2009 when United announced he had "expressed his desire to leave" and that Real Madrid's world-record $131 million offer had been accepted. Less than three weeks later, the transfer was concluded. In the next 12 seasons - nine with Real Madrid and then three with Juventus - Ronaldo continued to evolve as a player and add more trophies to his glittering CV, as well as individual honors including a further four Ballon d'Or awards, giving him five in total. By the summer of 2021, he had won over 30 major trophies during his career, including five UEFA Champions Leagues, four FIFA Club World Cups, and seven league championships after becoming the first player to win the title in England, Spain and Italy. He also experienced international glory by captaining Portugal to victory in the final of Euro 2016. On 27 August 2021, United stunned the football world, and delighted the club's global fan base, by announcing a transfer deal had been struck with Juventus for Ronaldo to rejoin the Reds. Four days later, his transfer was finalized. Ronaldo was finally back home where he belongs.

From a shy teenager to one of the greatest ever, Cristiano Ronaldo has come full circle to the club that started his career. Although many have suggested that at 36 years old, Ronaldo's best years are behind him, it will only fuel the man more to prove everyone wrong and bring glory back to the club he loves so much.

Sources: BleacherReport, Manutd.com

The life of Von Froth

Frothing = in surfing means when a surfer is so excited they 'froth' at the mouth. There is no greater excitement level than froth.

Written by: Alexei Obolensky
Photos: Von Rupp Media

There is no bigger dream for surfers than chasing swells across the globe.

Monitoring charts, winds, storm patterns and preparing equipment to leave at a moment's notice, for the all-important 'score' – a thrill unlike any other. Well, enter the life of Nic Von Rupp, or as he's affectionately known, Von Froth.

Hailing from Portugal, Nic has long left his mark over the past years on the global big wave scene with his hard-charging and innovative approach to getting the best and biggest barrels (see also, tubes) at the world's scariest waves. Nic's been documenting this in true 21st-century fashion via his Vlog, "Von Froth"

"Von Froth is my Youtube series that has been going for a year and a half or so. Real-life traveling and the hard work it takes to chase these swells. The training, who I am, who I hang out with, and I guess my life in general. I've always done videos but I feel that nowadays people want to see a little bit more of the behind-the-scenes. We do two episodes a month of what is like to be a professional surfer chasing swells and the ups and downs that go with it: Fear, obsession, excitement and hopefully bliss when it all comes together..."

Having just returned from his latest 'score' in Indonesia, a veritable paradise for any surfer, widely considered a mecca with its long crystal blue waves and insane barrels - offering surfers a blank canvas to express themselves, seemingly a world away from the woes of the world.

Gripped by his travels across the world and scoring a once-in-a-decade swell in Greenbush, we decided to give Nic a call to find out more about him, his trip, and of course, the life of the Von Froth:

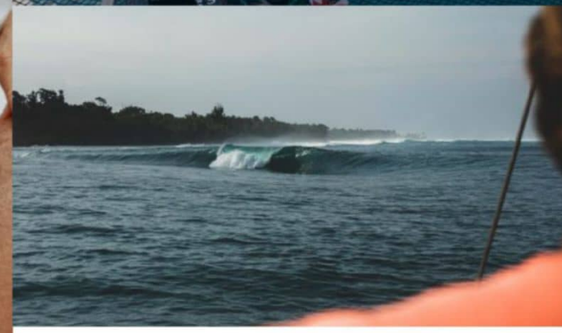
" I'm born and raised in Portugal, my dad is German but grew up in the US and my mum is Swiss Portuguese. I always had a lot of energy as a kid so my parents threw me into sports. My dad always had these cassettes in the Car, like the Beach Boys talking about surfing and that got me really curious. I only started when I was 9 but I always had this warm feeling about surfing. Almost like it was meant to be"

"My parents are academics so education was always the most important thing in my life. Sports, or professional sports weren't really on the radar. Professional surfing, at least free surfing in Portugal has only really taken off recently so there wasn't really examples of people 'making it' that I could feed off. I started winning some European competitions and I guess started making enough money to pay my bills and travel the world, so I told my parents I was going to make a go of it! I did the competition scene for a while but it was always chasing swells that was my passion"

*"It really sucked traveling halfway around the world and losing the first heat in one-foot waves whilst at home the waves were amazing. After a while I just thought, you know what, I'm just going to do my own thing here and go and chase swells. The timing was good with the Internet revolution... If you are good, and doing sick sh*t – it doesn't matter where you are from. Before people only cared about Hawaii. Now you can chase swells anywhere"*

"Since then over the past 6 of 7 years, I've been just chasing swells. The biggest ones the world has to offer. It's been a process of learning how to surf these waves better and taking a different approach. Stepping it up, little by little. Doing what I love, I'm as happy as can be, well everything is great until a 50ft wave lands on your head"

"The past 18 months have of course been a weird time. You can't just jump on flights like you used to. We used to leave for swells with 6 hours notice and you just can't be that reactive anymore. I'm fortunate to live in an amazing country for waves, so I can't complain. We get great waves at home and we can still chase swells around Europe so it could be a lot worse"



"Indonesia is my place of choice. I have a connection with that place, amazing friends, some of the best waves of my life and a beautiful country. I really wanted to spend some quality time there this summer whilst Europe was small, and lucked into an amazing run of swell. The travel there is a mission, when I turned up it was at the peak of the crisis with 80k cases a day, which weighed on my mind as the hospitals were totally overwhelmed. However, after the 8-day quarantine, it was sad to walk around places I know that are usually full of traveling surfers and tourists and they were deserted. I really hope it opens back up soon and the surfers can start spending money and time in that beautiful country. It's a tough one, as it of course great to score uncrowded waves but when people's livelihoods rely on it – it's a different story. They need our support"

"I'm usually pretty lucky, I never have many injuries but right when I arrived at the first wave an insect called a Tomcat got me, it's smaller than an ant but has as much toxins as a cobra. The whole right side of my face swelled up and even the locals were freaking out – I was just so surf hungry I just kept surfing, of course, it swelled up on the best day of the swell... In the end, it was fine but I was pretty scared as it was right next to my eye"

"The Mentawaiis island chain is the Jewel in the crown of Indonesia. It's surfing heaven, so many waves in a pure tropical setting – the best place in the world for surfing. It's like going back in time, most of the islands are unoccupied and you feel like the only person in the world. Pure bliss. There are two ways of doing the Mentawaiis - one is by luxurious charter boat which is expensive but a good way to access different waves. The other way is more feral, stay on land and access the waves via little local canoes. We did a bit of both, local canoe crossings, land camps and some time on a boat. We had some amazing sessions at Kandui which for me is one of the best waves in the world - staying at the resort right there which is one of my favorite places in the world. We chased a swell to the south of the island chain, which was a full mission. There's no public transport so we decided to take the local canoes with drivers to a wave called Greenbush which is one of the best waves on the planet, yet 7 hours on open seas in a tiny boat wasn't exactly the most relaxing way to get there. But when you determined when you are obsessed, it's a small price to pay – you just do it. We got rewarded though and rocked up to the most perfect, pristine waves with no one around"

"Now, I'm back from Indo. Back in Portugal, chilling out, seeing friends, training, getting ready for the winter season. My focus turns to the North Atlantic, especially my home big wave spot of Nazare. My real work starts in October, my entire focus is on riding huge waves at Nazare. I can't wait for the swells to start filling in and see how far I can push the limits – and most importantly – surviving"

For more, hit Nic's Youtube channel for the full Von Froth experience.

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COLLEGE ATHLETE *Turned* ENTREPRENEUR

Tips On Making A Splash!

Luis Manta didn't always know he was going to be a businessman, but the former College athlete knew what it took to have passion and drive. After graduation from school, Luis took his knowledge of what worked and didn't in the training room, and turned that into a huge moneymaker in the beverage industry.

From how his new drink is selling out on Amazon, to fitness training tips and more, FHM spoke to Luis about it all!

As a former college athlete, what was your day-to-day training like when playing? There is a great soccer culture in St. Louis and there were always expectations to perform well there. Saint Louis University is the most decorated Men's soccer program in the US, so most of us that went there wanted to be professionals. We trained every day at Saint Louis University and would lift weights multiple times a week as well. Although the environment was extremely competitive I loved every second of it and made great friends. I highly recommend kids get involved in sports, not only does it help them better their social skills and learn teamwork but it also sets a good foundation to learn how to practice and work hard at a skill. There were a lot of skills I picked up as an athlete that have translated really well in my business career. A lot of the players I played with were extremely motivated individuals and I was able to learn a lot from them. Soccer is such a worldly sport so you get a lot of diversity, I've developed so much by being able to learn from others with different experiences. Some friends I played with became pros but others have retired and are quite successful in the business world as well. I actually have had a couple of business partnerships come together because of an old teammate I played with.

How important was what you put in your body food/drink-wise? Did the school trainers ever educate you? Extremely important. What you consume will have a direct impact on your performance over time. Each player on the team at Saint Louis University had the opportunity to work with a nutritionist. We would also monitor our fluid intake and body fat composition and ate a lot of planned meals as a team. The programs and meals were curated towards our training regimes. Injury prevention and recovery is impacted by diet as well. As a soccer player, I broke both my leg and my foot and required multiple surgeries. Most don't realize that potassium is extremely important for bone growth and I spent a lot of time trying to help my body recover from these injuries by consuming more potassium. A lot of the nutritional knowledge I picked up as an athlete I have used when working to develop new food and beverages products. The advice I usually give people is to look at the back of the label on their food and if the ingredients don't look natural you probably shouldn't be putting it in your body. That's one of the great parts about Seoul Juice, it's just fruit juice and water.

Why did you decide to develop and create your own health beverage? For high endurance athletes like soccer players replenishing your electrolytes is so important. Our trainers and nutritionists wanted us to consume sports drinks or coconut water to maximize our electrolyte intake. I absolutely hated the taste of coconut water; it tastes like laundry water to me, and I didn't like the artificial ingredients that many sports drinks used. I realized there must be a better alternative out there. That's when I started working on creating Seoul Juice, a recovery beverage made from three simple ingredients that tastes refreshing. I realized quickly that I had created something special when students on campus kept requesting Seoul Juice on campus or at parties. I was fortunate to be able to get introduced to the Chaifetz's School of Business Entrepreneurship Center consisting of Dr. Jerome Katz, Tim Hayden, and Tyler Sondag. There I was able to join the school's accelerator program where I started my journey of taking Seoul Juice from my college apartment and making it available to the world.

What makes your drink so special that athletes now can't get enough of it? In order to be a high-level athlete, you have to care about what is going into your body. It's the fuel that allows you to perform at your best. A lot of the health products that are marketed to athletes fall short in the taste department, so athletes such as myself became accustomed to some of these awful tasting products that would help us compete. Being an athlete myself I was extremely disappointed by this. When I realized I could create a natural product that helped athletes perform better and tasted amazing, I had to share that with others. I'm also extremely grateful to have been able to test different formulations over and over with my athlete friends while in school, this helped me get to the current product you see in stores today. This is another reason athletes trust our brand, they know our product was built by athletes for athletes and that we put a lot of time and thought into everything they need.

As a young entrepreneur now, what top 5 tips can you give to others wanting to start their own business or create their own beverage?

1. Make sure you are passionate about the business you're starting and the industry you are going into. If you don't love it, you won't last.
2. Become an expert in your industry. Work for someone who's done what you are trying to do and read every book possible on the subject.
3. Next would be to start. A lot of people try to raise funding with an idea. I highly recommend doing what you can on your own to start, so you can pivot and understand your idea fully before you go to investors to scale.
4. Really listen to your customers. The company is not about you — it's about them — so really explore the feedback you receive. Honoring passionate customers is the best way to market any business to ensure the company is built with and for them.
5. Ask others for help and advice. You'd be surprised how many great people are out there.

What is the biggest lesson you have learned so far? To stay motivated through gratitude. The past year and a half have been really difficult for everyone globally. Starting a business during a pandemic has been difficult but my family and I have been lucky to have stayed healthy so far. I am extremely grateful that Seoul Juice has received so much love and support from our community. It's a really cool opportunity to be able to create a product that helps people from just an idea in your head. Some people find motivation via wanting something to prove but I find it a lot more exciting to be motivated by the opportunity to create something that people all over depend on daily.

How important is social media these days when it comes to branding? Social media is huge because it allows you to better connect with your audience. Anything that makes the customer experience more personal is a positive. I think this in turn helps build the power of your brand. E-Commerce is growing exponentially as well and social media is currently the best marketing medium for E-Commerce. I highly encourage business owners especially in the beverage space to first launch their product online. It really lets you test the idea out and reach consumers in your target market. It also allows you to get early feedback and make adjustments to your product. It is so important to be in constant communication with your customers. Brands have a duty to be open to communication with their customers. By having a close relationship and creating content, you're able to help positively impact your business.

Will your drink make people better at sports? Sadly we can't help anyone's technical ability or physical genetics but we will give you the best chance to perform at your highest level by replenishing your electrolytes. Low potassium levels negatively impact both energy and endurance. Even non-athletes need more potassium. The American Dietary Guidelines suggest that adults get 4700mg of potassium per day and currently the average American only gets 1755mg. So one can see it's really important to start upping their intake. It is especially important in kids and those who are pregnant as potassium helps with bone strength and development.

Sports or business? Which got you more eyeballs from the ladies? I'd have to say sports as I had a lot more free time to date. Being a start-up founder doesn't give you a lot of time to be a good boyfriend sadly. Hopefully, as the world starts getting back to normal dating will start becoming more manageable. I'll definitely have to ask some exes about what look they preferred though, at one point in time I was changing my haircut every month to whatever new style Beckham or Ronaldo had. I'm sure your readers have some opinions on whether they prefer the soccer star or corporate executive look.

What is your ultimate dream/goal? Working for myself has always been a dream. So I'm very grateful for the opportunity Seoul Juice has given me to do that. Hearing athletes rave about the product helping them brings me a lot of joy and motivation. I want Seoul Juice to one day be available to anyone looking to better themselves and their performance. On a personal level, I'd love to someday be able to sponsor some young soccer players and give them the opportunities others were able to give to me when I was a kid.

Matilda *Dahlin*

Model | @matildadahlinofficial
Photographer Arthur St. John | @arthurstjohn
HMUA Estera Beauty | @beautybyestera
Location Serob Papazyan

Please type your name as you would like it published....
Matilda Dahlin

Welcome to FHM Sweden, we are delighted to have you! How do you feel right now?
Thank you so much! I am so excited to be published in FHM Sweden as I am from Sweden myself.

Have you ever been to Sweden?
Yes, I was born and raised in a small town in Sweden called Vadstena, which is over 600 years old.

Where do you live now?
I have been living in Santa Barbara, CA for the past 17 years. I moved to Santa Barbara as a teenager with my family in 2004 for my dads job and have stayed in California ever since. It is definitely a dream place to live and feels like a paradise everyday. As I miss the rest of my family very much in Sweden, I wouldn't move back.

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you think of Sweden? The delicious Swedish food, like the traditional shrimp sandwiches, Swedish meatballs and of course the amazing candy and sweets. I also think about the traditional holidays- Midsommar, Santa Lucia, and Christmas Eve that are always the big highlights of the year. Me and my family celebrated these traditions every year since I was a little girl.

Are you romantic?
Yes, I am very romantic. I love sunset walks on the beach, having picnics on the beach or the park, going to the movies, and one of my dreams- going horseback riding at sunset. Of course I'm also a sucker for roses and chocolate.

Describe your perfect date...
My perfect date would be having a picnic at the beach at sunset and then watching the stars.

Favorite food?
My favorite food is anything with chicken, like chicken piccata. Chicken is such a great source of protein and it's very healthy at the same time.

Favorite drink?
My favorite drink is sex on the beach. I'm definitely a sucker for mixed drinks.

Favorite movie?
My favorite movie is Titanic, as it is very romantic but sad at the same time.

What is your best asset?
My best asset is having a positive attitude. No matter how hard or difficult something is, I always strive to make it happen.

Can you tell us 1 secret about you? (we won't tell anyone - wink)
One secret I have is that I'm addicted to chocolate. I definitely have a guilty pleasure of licking chocolate syrup off a spoon when I have my chocolate cravings.

Which animal best describes you and why?
I would describe myself as a dog, as I am super active all day everyday and I look for unconditional love in people.

Describe yourself using 3 adjectives...
Outgoing, kind and loving

Biggest pet peeve:
My biggest pet peeve is when people complain about something they can't get and they don't do anything about it to get it done themselves.

What are some of your goals in life you wish to accomplish?
My dream is to model for big brands like Guess, and to travel the world with my family.

Where can our readers find you? (social media)
You can find me on social media, my IG: @ matildadahlinofficial and FB: Matilda Dahlin

NEVER GROWING OLD

The Mach 1 name returns after a long hiatus but one thing hasn't changed: It still burns rubber

Mach 1, that name sounds familiar

We're not talking the speed of sound here, but the late 60s was a golden period for car names echoing anything that was pop culture at the time. Major milestones like supersonic travel epitomized everything cool about engineering and braver and naturally, Ford wanted to latch onto that movement, especially at a time when the Mustang was struggling to paint its performance image.

If you're lucky enough to find one, you'll be able to identify the Mach 1 by the unique 'shaker hood,' new grille, signature Mach 1 decals and 7.0-liter V8 that unsurprisingly was set up and geared for quarter-mile times.

What's the connection to the new one?

Fifty-two years have passed and in that time the lineage has worn thin with really just one model launched in the early 2000s linking new with old. Compared to what it could have been, had there been more regular updates, news of a returning Mach 1 name is more likely to be met with a shrug and some internet searching.

How do they compare?

Relatively faithfully, if you factor in half a century of evolution. The artwork – various markets could choose different color combinations - helps accentuate certain lines and gives clues that lead back to the original. There's a custom grille that replicates the bigger air nostrils and position of the headlights and different wheels too with Mach 1 badges positioned just behind the front arches. You'll happily forgive some of the little aerodynamic details that weren't around on the original simply because they add up to a much-improved handling car.

Like with its predecessors, these Mach 1s are still higher on the exclusive list and represent the ultimate Mustang package without heading over to Shelby or Roush.

If you want electric, buy a Mach-E GT

It's great that Ford has developed an all-electric version of its performance car while treating the Mach 1 with equal enthusiasm. It's a rare strategy but it's bound to keep all their customers happy in this rapidly-changing market and extends the lifeline on the normally aspirated V8.

This Mach 1 deploys the 5.0-liter V8 with its outputs pointing upward to 480 horsepower and 420lb-ft – figures aped by the Mustang Bullitt. Make no mistake, this is a fast car; it'll clock 0-60 in around 5 seconds, or conversely sit in one spot and do burnouts with hilarious ease thanks to features like line lock that applies full brakes to the front wheels – if there was a title for best burnout car, this would win! And it sounds angry too without the need to toggle on various modes, or even worse, deceive one's ears with artificial noise channeled in through the cabin's speakers.

Can the chassis keep up?

For a car that isn't molded from carbon fiber and doesn't take a diet too seriously, the Mach 1 still impresses once you've stopped having a few silly laughs and tuck into some apexes. Yes, the steering is a bit light for a car of this size, but the Mach 1's cornering credentials lie in the fact that it utilizes chassis upgrades from the Shelby GT350 and also places a big emphasis on managing temperatures so that you can spend more time driving it hard without performance dropping off. The underside of the Mach 1 features an extended surface used to direct airflow to the brakes and oil cooler, and the Brembo brake system feels firmer, with more confidence when you need to reign this Pony back in.

And like most of its competitors out on the market, the Mach 1 is replete with adjustable dampers – retuned, of course – and these can be softened or firmed up as a crucial element in the preferred driving mode. It results in a far more layered drive than the one-dimensional Mach 1 that appeared some fifty years ago, and while it does customization in rather thick chunks compared to the finely sliced German machinery, we never found ourselves unhappy with any of the combinations on offer.

Time to shift gears

It's not the volume seller but a manual option is available, albeit sans the iconic cue ball shifter knob that was among our favorite highlights during the Bullitt's limited production run. The six-speed manual borrows hardware from the Shelby GT350 for a shortened throw with rev-matching and flat-foot shifting. You'll be pleased to know that Mach 1s equipped with a manual concede very little time versus the automatic.

Does that make it the better choice? That's highly subjective; we often find ourselves feeling guilty for appreciating the Mustang's more docile side in equal measure with the V8 burbling along through an open window as the 10-speed gearbox melts its way through the gears. The 'box can also just as easily deliver more choppy shifts when required and the paddles do provide some tactile involvement.

Interior – The standard stuff

Along with the circular air vents, blocky instruments and rows of toggle switches which are classic Mustang fare, there is a small Mach 1 plaque inside that helps add to the impression of exclusivity. Rather pleasing is the way the price has leveled out compared to rivals and this makes the overall offering seem like decent value. There's a Bose 10-speaker audio system, electric seats with seat heaters, Ford's SYNC 3 infotainment system that pairs to a phone in minutes and some active safety systems that don't bombard the experience with artificial intelligence. The Mustang Mach 1 comes standard with Track Apps with built-in accelerators and other tools to measure acceleration times – exactly the sort of temptation that might land you in a heap of trouble on the road.

Final thoughts, does it live up to the name?

You needn't be a veteran Mustang fan to realize the Mach 1 is the one to go for and the rare trifecta of rear-wheel drive, normally aspirated V8 and manual gearbox. The small price difference is easily palatable when you start adding up the quality upgrades you're getting. Those, plus the limited production number, do a fine good job of re-establishing the Mustang as a bonafide performance car that you need to own and experience just once in your life. This is a brutally honest, no-nonsense and hugely entertaining package that despite the aforementioned refinements hasn't forgotten its mischievous side.

Pawan Dhingara

EARTH'S SILKY WAY

A new engine, a more dynamic chassis and one of the largest grilles you'll see this year

At a stage when SUVs are becoming sleeker, sharper and toning down off-road prowess to favor insane acceleration speeds, the Lexus LX sticks out like a sore, shiny thumb. Here the emphasis isn't so much on stopwatch times, but more about delivering excessive presence and opulence, and it's extremely hard to tear one's eyes away from 2021's biggest and flashiest grille.

From a mechanical blueprint, the Lexus LX has swallowed the recently-launched Toyota Land Cruiser – quite the achievement because that car isn't a subtle sight. The two cars were developed in close collaboration with the challenge to differentiate the end-user experience as widely as possible.

These fresh batch of images manage to convince us that these two cars hold a vastly different appeal and the badge engineering is suitably far removed, even in the least conspicuous areas. We're not including the chassis in that – the GA-F platform is copied across and brings with it numerous improvements such as stiffer construction and an enormous weight saving that reveals itself known through every element of the drive.

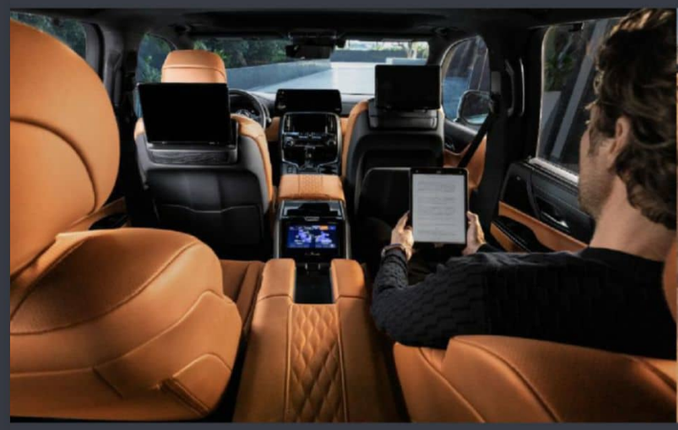
Although most LX models will live out their entire life on the road, the body-on-frame construction still packs a credible amount of off-road competence, backed up by low-range and a suite of driving modes that influence the car's adjustable ride height, gearing and power distribution via the car's traction control system. Unlike Toyota owners who almost revel in the prospect of getting stuck – and then the recovery to get unstuck – Lexus owners want the technology to provide a magic carpet ride across all types of terrain without ever meeting defeat. In fact, it's not even necessary to poke your head out the window - thanks to multiple vantage points supplied by the off-road cameras, it's easy to point the wheels exactly where you need them, and then relax and watch the ground melt away beneath you.

Like the chassis, the only difference between the engines is some badge cosmetics. Capacity has fallen quite steeply from the old 5.7-liter V8 to the new 3.4-liter V6 but a pair of turbochargers more than atone for the loss. The power of 409hp and 479lb-ft helps revolutionize the big car's dynamics into the 21st century but it is interesting that Lexus is keeping pretty quiet on the use of hybrid motors for future models. Instead, they do want you to know that a F-Sport version receives even larger wheels, grips a little harder and leans a little less although if that's really your criteria, a Range Rover Sport still does a better job.

Built for the American market – and possibly the Chinese market – interior space seems to stretch on forever.

A Ultra Luxury option with individual rear seats and gizmos like an elevated footrest probably best describes what the LX is all about but those who want a slightly more practical alternative can go for the five-seater and seven-seater option. Dual screens cover large surfaces of the dash, giving everything you touch a digital and customizable response and being Lexus the very short option's list won't make you feel as though you've added the smaller Land Cruiser into the final price.

Pawan Dhingara



SKID GAMES

New rear-wheel-drive version of Audi's R8 peels back the layers and steps up the power

Nowadays you can find Quattro in just about any Audi, as long as you search high enough up the model's range. And when there's no Quattro option, there's always a front-wheel-drive alternative. The brand from Ingolstadt just doesn't subscribe to rear-wheel-drive like its two German rivals BMW and Mercedes.

Well, that's only true 99 percent of the time because on special occasions Audi does delete the front driveshafts from the Audi R8 to produce a rear-wheel-drive version of their ultimate supercar.

If you went over to Lamborghini you would find something very similar has been taking place with the Huracan which has spawned several rear-wheel-drive offspring such as the creatively-named Huracan RWD and the Huracan STO which was detailed extensively in last month's issue. It's all been done to deliver a lighter, purer driving experience and send a few sets of rear tires to an early end.

Audi has just launched a Performance version of its latest R8, available in two distinctive flavors; Quattro and rear-wheel drive. The rear-wheel-drive R8 is by all accounts, the apex of the four-rings, although the acceleration figures of the newly-launched e-tron are actually a whisker quicker. It's certainly the louder of the two thanks to its 5.2-liter V10 which gains a bit more power thanks to myriad updates, all the while ignoring the batteries or turbochargers. It's actually a tune that takes some inspiration from the LMS GT4 race car and boasts figures of 562hp and 406lb-ft going to the rear wheels via a 7-speed S Tronic gearbox. Grip troubles? Not so, Audi says it can still hit 0-60mph in 3.7 seconds.

Fast but probably not the underlying motive to own a rear-wheel-drive R8 versus the more evenly tempered Quattro R8. By contrast, Audi says you can do 'controlled drifts' in the RWD R8 thanks to a mechanical rear-differential and a plethora of ESC settings that work in the background and aim to be as unobtrusive as possible.

Much like its Italian clone, the Lamborghini STO, there's a major transfer of race car parts onto the road car's skeleton. According to Audi's accounting department, as much as 60 percent! This includes larger radiator grilles, a new front splitter, a rear diffuser outlet and revised exhaust pipes. No roll cage, stripped interior and fire extinguisher, which presumably is where a chunk of the LMS GT4's distinguishing features can be listed.

So which one do you go for? Our heart says the RWD version but the head knows that for every punch the RWD can throw, the Quattro can parry and come back with a knockout punch. The differences are on a perfectly dry road are minimal but so are the gains – it's only when you start driving an R8 in mixed conditions does the Quattro win the argument thanks to its underlying greater bandwidth.

For the true raw, untamed experience with the same engine, then Lamborghini is probably where you should go, otherwise, the R8 in Quattro guise is still one of the most complete supercars you can buy.

Pawan Dhingara

Chocolate

FLAXSEED FLAPJACKS

Prep time: *10min* | Cooking time: *10min* | Servings: *10*

Ingredients

- 10oz (280ml) egg whites - 8 large egg whites or alternatively you can use 4 whole eggs
- 2 heaped tbsp of ground flax seeds
- 1 tbsp (heaped) of almond flour
- 1 heaped tablespoon of raw cacao
- 1 tsp caramel essence
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 tbsp raw honey

Instructions

1. Place all ingredients in a shaker with a whisk ball and shake well for 60 seconds, or place all ingredients in a mixing bowl and beat to a smooth batter.
2. Prepare a crepe pan with nonstick spray.
3. Preheat over medium heat.
4. With a tablespoon scoop batter into the pan, use 1/4 of the mix for 1 flapjack.
5. Cook until bubbles form on the surface, then flip over and cook the other side until golden brown.
6. Finish off by spreading the flapjacks with some almond butter, then topping them with sliced banana, raw honey, almond flakes and cacao.
7. Serve and enjoy!

Toppings

- almond butter
- raw honey
- sliced Banana
- almond flakes
- cacao powder

Healthy Almond Flour

CHICKEN SCHNITZEL

Prep time: *10min* | Cooking time: *±25min* | Servings: *4*

Ingredients

- 1 cup almond flour
- 2 heaped tablespoons of sesame seeds
- 1 heaped tsp fresh garlic
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 heaped teaspoons of onion flakes
- 1 heaped teaspoon of dried parsley
- 3 tbsp raw honey
- 4 large chicken fillets - tenderized
- 4 eggs - beaten
- 4 tsp olive oil
- 1 pinch paprika for garnish
- 1 teaspoon freshly chopped Italian parsley for garnish

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 390F.
2. Prepare a baking tray with foil and nonstick spray.
3. Tenderize the chicken breast.
4. Seal the breast with honey on each side.
5. For the crumbs: mix the almond flour, sesame seeds, fresh garlic, salt, onion flakes and dried parsley.
6. Whisk the eggs.
7. Start by rolling the chicken breast in the crumbs so it sticks to the honey then dip it in the egg before rolling it in the crumbs again.
8. Place crumbed chicken onto the baking tray - repeat with all the breasts.
9. Bake for 20 minutes.
10. Remove from the oven, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with paprika and place back into the oven for another 5 minutes.
11. Serve warm with a side of your choice.

Heavenly

HAKE FILLETS

Prep time: *5min* | Cooking time: *30min* | Servings: *4-5*

Ingredients

- 1.8lb frozen hake fillets
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 pinch of chili flakes
- 1 tsp dried parsley
- 1 red onion diced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp chopped fresh Italian parsley for garnish

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 390F.
2. Prepare the oven tray with nonstick spray.
3. Place frozen hake fillets on the oven tray and pop into the oven. Remove from the oven after 10 minutes and season by starting with the salt, then paprika, chili flakes and lastly the dried parsley.
4. Scatter the onion over the hake fillets.
5. Place back into the oven for another 10 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven, drizzle with olive oil and bake for another 10 minutes till golden brown and crispy.
7. Serve garnished with chopped fresh parsley.
8. Best served with salad, vegetables or a starch of your choice.

Sesame-crusted

EGGPLANT STEAKS

WITH POMEGRANATE AND WILD ROCKET

Prep time: *10min* | Cooking time: *±25min* | Servings: *4*

Ingredients

- 1 large eggplant - or 2 medium eggplants
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 heaped tsp paprika
- ¼ cup raw honey
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- 2 heaped tbsp sesame seeds
- 3.5oz (100g) baby spinach
- 1 tbsp almond flour
- half an ounce (15g) wild rocket
- 3oz (80g) pomegranate arils

Instructions

1. Cut the eggplant into steaks about half an inch (1.5cm) thick.
2. Combine the olive oil, paprika, honey, salt and black pepper in a large bowl.
3. Add the eggplant steaks and allow them to absorb the marinade. Coat the marinated eggplant steaks with sesame seeds before cooking.
4. Heat a large frying pan until it's very hot and fry the eggplant steaks on both sides until golden brown.
5. Place the baby spinach on the bottom of a serving dish.
6. Place the fried eggplant steaks on top, sprinkle with the almond flour and garnish with the wild rocket and pomegranate arils.
7. Serve immediately.

STRAWBERRY TART

Prep time: *10min* | Cooking time: *±25min*

Ingredients

For the crust

- 7oz (200g) soaked and mashed dates
- 7oz (200g) almond flour
- 2 tsp caramel essence
- 1/2 tsp salt

For the filling

- 1lb (500g) sweet potato mash
- 3.5oz (100g) almond butter
- 3 tsp caramel essence
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp raw honey
- 3 eggs

Garnish

- 8oz (250g) fresh strawberries
- 1 tsp raw honey
- 1 handful of freshly chopped mint
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 tsp caramel essence
- 1/2 tsp almond flour

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375F (190C).
2. Prepare a large 10-inch (23cm) pie dish with nonstick spray.
3. In a mixing bowl, soak the almonds in hot water till soft and drain.
4. Add the almond flour, salt and essence and mix well till you have a crumb-like texture.
5. Make a pie crust by evenly distributing the mixture in the pie dish and pressing down firmly.
6. Set aside.
7. Mix the sweet potato mash, almond butter, essence, salt and honey. Whisk the eggs separately till fluffy and add to the mixture. Mix well and pour into the baking dish.
8. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes till filling is set and crust is a dark golden-brown color.
9. In a small mixing bowl, chop the strawberries, drizzle with honey, add the caramel essence, salt and a handful of chopped mint.
10. Finish off by arranging it on top, sprinkle with almond flour and refrigerate until it's ready to serve.

MARTA VEGAZ

Model | @vegazzzzzzzzz

Photographer Lance Washington | @freelancephotograpgy_
MUA Andrew Carter | @andrewcarterbeauty
PR LSA publications | @leo.alderman @lsapublications

FHM

Such an absolute honor to have you feature on FHM! What has your journey as a certified bombshell been like so far? So far, it's been exciting. I got to travel a lot and got to know a lot of new and interesting people.

We are blown away by your drive and professionalism, can you tell us what some of the things that motivate you to stay on top of your game are? Now a day there are so many more options and opportunities to create or build your career you have to stay up to date and in touch with people in this field. And chasing the next step is my motivation.

Top 3 moments of your career? I'm greatful for every single moment of my career but for sure my cover shoot was one of it.

What is your favorite chill time activity? My perfect lazy day would be at the pool tanning. Or watching tv or play Fortnite on my PlayStation and order food.

We are taking you out on your ultimate date and we really want to knock this one out the ballpark, what would that entail? One over the top date wish was always to fly on a private jet to a exclusive destination and have a romantic vacation or dinner.

What are, hands down, your absolute favorite things to do? I love to travel. Explore new destinations and revisit places I've already been to. And I am a huge fan of fine dining.

3 ultimate deal breakers when it comes to men? Being cheap! I don't like men who don't tip. Men who are too concerned about either their looks or their weight.

You have one last chance to do something you have always wanted to do, with no limits on anything, what are you doing? I would love to fly a fighter jet. That's definitely on my bucket list.

Where would you say is your favorite place to be in the world and why? Tokyo. I just love everything about this city. The food is amazing. The city is so clean and the People so polite. And they just have great taste in everything.

What currently playing on loop on your playlist? I would say it's still The Business from Tiesto. It just always puts me in the best mood.

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? Best way to keep in touch with me is Instagram. I post about my work and my trips. So just follow me and stay updated.

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any part words out there for our readers? Thank you so much for having me. It was a pleasure!

MILLIONAIRE SECRETS

Tips on how to succeed in business!

While “they say” money can’t buy you happiness, it sure can buy you a life filled with many exciting experiences, fancy cars and help out in a lot of ways. One such man named Tommy Patterson has learned this fully. As someone whose family came from nothing, who also dropped out of high school himself, to also failing multiple times in business, to now being an owner of multimillion-dollar companies, his path and secrets are ones we spoke to him exclusively about as it relates to many of us reading.

You have been through a lot in life, but what keeps you going? My motivation to keep going is the pursuit of personal growth and evolution of self. Challenges in life and business are par for the course. I keep going because I have clarity of purpose. I have a clear vision of the future that I’ve created, the culture I’ve developed, and the impact on people’s lives that I’ve made. This has already happened, I just need to catch up with my future self.

You talk about “failing forward” a lot. Explain this concept to us all! Each and every day we as people have the opportunity to create the life we want. Unfortunately, most never experience this because of our aversion to risk and our unwillingness to fail, learn, and grow from our experiences. In order to have something you’ve never had before, you must be willing to do something you’ve never done before. Failing forward is about embracing failure and learning from your mistakes. It’s about taking calculated risks to gain knowledge and understanding so you can evolve and create the life you want.

What are the top 5 tips you can give our readers who want to succeed in business?
1. Fail fast and often, learn, grow, optimize, repeat.
2. Your offer is everything. A no-brainer, value-driven offer that drives engagement and impacts our prospects lives works no matter what’s happening in the marketplace. Stop trying to be like everyone else.
3. Find your voice, pave your own way, be your own company.
4. Never focus on more than three high-values tasks in a single day. High-value tasks are activities that can only be done by you that will drive the biggest impact in your business if completed.
5. How you do anything is how you do everything. The growth of your business is a reflection of your standards in life.

How important is social media to the success of a brand these days? Social media is the foundation of any successful DTC eCommerce brand. Your ability to engage, educate, validate, and convert at SCALE is about creating awareness to funnel prospects through a journey to achieve your result.

What is a secret most millionaires like yourself and billionaires don’t want people to know when it comes to success? The secret that most don’t want people to know when it comes to success is that there is no secret. Success is determined by your ability to successfully execute ideas while mitigating risk. The only difference between successful people and unsuccessful people is that successful people are just willing to do what unsuccessful people are not willing to do.

And finally, beyond working, how do you keep your mind and body in healthy shape? I stay healthy and balanced by managing my time efficiently on a daily basis. Everything is scheduled and on my google calendar. Every morning at 6 AM I'm on my peloton for 60 minutes of exertion and self-education. I'm always consuming courses and audiobooks to increase my knowledge and curiosity. Your body is your temple and what you feed it both physically and mentally needs to be aligned with your north star goals.

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